

THE INVENTION CLAIMED IS:

1. A kit of apparatus used collectively for carving shapes through a shell of a pumpkin or other fruit or vegetable, comprising:

5 30¹ a cutting die element having a closed peripheral configuration of the shape to be carved into the pumpkin shell, the die element including a side wall which extends in a height dimension between a lower cutting edge and an upper striking edge, the die element further having a transverse dimension extending between locations of the striking edge; and

10 a striking tool for striking the die element to drive the die element through the pumpkin shell, the striking tool having a head and a handle extending from the head by which to grip and wield the striking tool, the head having a contact surface adapted to contact the striking edge of the die element, the contact surface having a lateral dimension which is greater than the largest transverse dimension between opposing locations of the striking edge of the die element.

2. A kit as defined in claim 1 wherein:

the striking tool transfers impact force from the contact surface of the head to substantially the entire striking edge of the die element.

3. A kit as defined in claim 2 wherein:

the head of the striking tool contains the substantial majority of the mass of the striking tool; and

5 the impact force is derived primarily from the mass of the head of the striking tool when the striking tool moves into contact with the die element.

4. A kit as defined in claim 3 wherein:
the head of the striking tool comprises wood.
5. A kit as defined in claim 4 wherein:
the head of the striking tool has a shape primarily in a form of a right cylinder.
6. A kit as defined in claim 3 wherein:
the head of the striking tool is formed of predominantly rigid but slightly resilient material.
7. A kit as defined in claim 1 wherein:
the contact surface of the head is generally of a planar configuration; and
the striking edge of the die element is generally located in a plane.
8. A kit as defined in claim 1 wherein:
the upper striking edge includes a reinforcement extending along the peripheral configuration of the side wall.
9. A kit as defined in claim 8 wherein:
the reinforcement extends continuously along the peripheral configuration of the side wall.
10. A kit as defined in claim 8 wherein:
the reinforcement comprises a lip.
11. A kit as defined in claim 10 wherein:
the lip extends outward from the closed peripheral configuration of the die element.

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12. A kit as defined in claim 1 wherein:
the lower cutting edge includes serrations formed along the peripheral configuration of the side wall.
13. A kit as defined in claim 12 wherein:
at least part of the serrations are formed in a concave/convex configuration.
14. A kit as defined in claim 1 further comprising:
a scoop and scraping tool having a handle portion and a scoop portion, the handle portion adapted to be gripped, the scoop portion having a concave curvature within which to contain pumpkin seeds and fiber material from the interior of the pumpkin, the scoop portion further having a cutting edge for scraping a layer of an inside surface of the shell to reduce the thickness of the shell to an amount no greater than the height dimension of the side wall of the die element.
15. A kit as defined in claim 14 wherein:
the convex curvature of the scoop portion promotes curling of the layer inside as the material is scraped from the shell.
16. A kit as defined in claim 14 further comprising:
a plurality of said die elements, the peripheral configuration of each of the plurality of said die elements defining a shape different from the other die elements of the plurality.
17. A method of carving shapes in the shell of a pumpkin or other fruit or vegetable by driving a cutting die element into the shell of the pumpkin or fruit or

lateral dimension which is greater than the majority of the largest transverse dimension

5 between opposite sides of the striking edge.

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~~21.~~ A method as defined in claim ¹~~17~~ further comprising the step of:

scraping a layer of material from an inner surface of the shell to reduce the thickness of the shell to an amount less than a height dimension between the cutting and striking edges of the die element.

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~~22.~~ A method as defined in claim ⁵~~21~~ further comprising the step of:

using a scoop and scraping tool to scrape the layer of material from the shell.

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23. A method of carving shapes in the shell of a pumpkin, fruit or vegetable which comprises driving a cutting die element through the shell by striking the die element with a striking tool, and further comprises steps of:

5 using a die element having a lower cutting edge and an upper striking edge;

applying impact force over substantially all of the upper striking edge simultaneously with each impact from the striking tool; and

10 using a striking tool having a contact surface with a lateral dimension which is greater than a largest transverse dimension between opposite sides of the upper striking edge to apply the impact force.

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~~24.~~ A method as defined in claim ⁷~~23~~ further comprising the step of:

driving the die element into the pumpkin shell until the cutting edge passes through an inner surface of the pumpkin shell.

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A method as defined in claim ~~23~~ further comprising the step of:

removing a cut-out section of the shell which is surrounded by the die element after the die element is driven into the shell;

pushing the cut-out section into the interior of the pumpkin while the die

5 element remains in the shell; and,

removing the die element from the pumpkin shell after the cut-out section has been removed from the die element.

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~~26.~~

A method as defined in claim 23 further comprising the step of:

scraping a layer of material from the shell at an inner surface of the shell to reduce the thickness of the shell to an amount less than a dimension between the cutting and striking edges of the die element.

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A method as defined in claim 23 further comprising the step of:

using a cutting die element having a serrated cutting edge; and

forcing a portion of the serrated cutting edge into an outer surface of the shell to hold the die element in position on the shell before striking the die element with the striking tool.

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A method of carving shapes in the shell of a pumpkin, fruit or vegetable which comprises the steps of:

using a die element having a lower serrated cutting edge and an upper striking edge;

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5 scraping a layer of material from the shell at an inner surface of the shell
to reduce the thickness of the shell to an amount less than a dimension between the
cutting and striking edges of the die element;

 piercing the outer surface of the shell with the serrated cutting edge to
hold the die element in position on the shell; and

10 forcing the die element into the shell until the cutting edge passes through
an inner surface of the shell.

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~~29~~. A method as defined in claim ¹²~~28~~ further comprising the step of:
 using a scoop and scraping tool to scrape the layer of material from the
shell; and

 removing a cut-out section of the shell which is surrounded by the die
5 element after the die element is forced into the shell.

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